

Practical Piety

Anent the subject of holiness which is attracting a good deal of attention in some quarters, we would remark, if it is in order, that a practical, rather than a sentimental or theoretical holiness, is what the church needs, and what all individual members need. We want that kind of holiness in a preacher which will faithfully preach the gospel and shepherd the flock. A preacher who is all the time floating around in the clouds of transcendentalism while the sheep are scattered and the wolf ravens among them is not the kind of holiness man we are looking for. A church member who is too much absorbed in his personal holiness to perform the duties of a Christian is of no service whatever. Give us a working holiness, please.

Then and Now

Learned writers state that the proportional increase of the church is not any greater now than it was during the ages of fiercest persecution. This is a humiliating statement. A free Bible, free churches, free pews, free gospel, popular Christianity, all these things do not avail to promote the prosperity of religion, and bring proportionally greater numbers of men and women into the fold of Christ. But then none of these things are regenerating agencies, while some of them are positively hostile to religion. Perhaps the worst thing which could have happened to the church is the popularity to which it has descended. This popularity with the world gives it the color of a sham. Even the most irreligious know that *Christ* was not popular with the world, that there was the most irreconcilable repulsion between the spirit of the world and the spirit of the Master; and when therefore they see his followers hobnobbing with Mr. Belial, invited to his "social functions," lionized, flattered and banqueted, toasted and slobbered over generally, they come to the quiet conclusion that this popular Christianity is a fraud. For the most part it is all they see. There *is* true religion; there *are* men and women who are like Christ, but they are a retiring lot, averse to publicity and ostentation of any kind, shrinking from the advertisement which even the world's ostracism brings them, living in out of the way corners, living perhaps too quietly, and cultivating too much, perhaps, the sensitiveness which amounts in more or less degree to the hiding of their light. When the devil quit murdering religion and started out to sham religion, he did the most cunning thing of his whole eventful career. It is evidently his last and best card, and he is playing it for all it is worth. It is an evil which the church must begin to fight. If all professing Christians were real Christians, the world would soon be converted, and the "thou-

sand wrongs" and "thousand wars" and thousand saloons would soon be rung out. Let us begin at the bottom; let each one appoint himself an investigating committee of one to find out how much of his own personal religion is a sham, and how much of it is the real thing.

Starving Vultures

They say that since an American administration has cleaned up Santiago the vultures are starving, and that they will now pounce on cats and small dogs. Thousands of them have lived for ages on the accumulated filth of these tropical cities. They were the scavengers, without which pestilence bred by decaying refuse would have long since depopulated the lands of the hot sun. There is a lesson for us in this circumstance related of the novelty of a clean municipal administration in Santiago. Filth, vultures, pestilence and death were the features of the Spanish administration. All this is changed by our wholesome American system; which however does not appear yet to be equal to the task of cleaning up a far worse contagion at home. Why do the vultures of the saloon, and the trust vultures increase, multiply, grow, batten and fatten in the midst of the land? It is because our civil administration is iniquitous. The law allows the saloon, and it practically allows the trust. It is legal to sell liquor, and therefore the rum vulture soars aloft, and flaps his dirty wings in the faces of decent people. He alights in the finest streets, and you have to go far to get around him. He feeds, not upon the refuse thrown out at back doors, he attacks not cats and dogs, but he plunges his ogreish beak into the flesh and blood of your young men. We advertise far and wide that our superior wisdom gives Santiago a clean administration, when as a matter of fact our superlative blindness and folly allows and condones an administration at home which is as dirty as the swill trough of satan's kitchen. The vultures of Santiago, poor, starving, wretched birds, are sweet doves beside the vultures which swarm in our streets and populate our cemeteries. They are chirping sparrows beside the trust vultures which are preparing mighty juggernauts to ride over the backs of prostrate toil. When will the day of wisdom come, and that universal emancipation which shall convert this Golgotha into the paradise that shall be? Lord, hasten it.

Too Many Holidays

An Illinois Congressman proposes to make the date of the destruction of the Maine a national holiday. The mental condition of this statesman must be peculiar. As well make a holiday to celebrate fatal fires, funerals, earthquakes and other disasters. We already have two national holidays in Febru-

ary, the month of the Maine disaster, and a third on any pretense would be piling them on pretty thick for a practical, business people who believe that living things, and living issues, and living duties are more important than dead ones. It is in line with human nature, however, to hanker after numerous holidays. Indeed there are not a few who would like to turn every day into a holiday, and lounge in uninterrupted leisure year in and year out. That is really the secret motive impelling the mad rush for accumulated wealth. Men work like steam engines in prospect of the time when they will be able to quit work altogether. But for the most part by the time that day arrives, when the goal has been won and the glitter of wealth abounds on every hand, habits have been confirmed which rob leisure of all its enjoyment, and make idleness impossible, a breeder of intolerable ennui. We have seen men who when the ceaseless energies of a business life have brought them wealth were unable to enjoy it, and could only find refuge from utter weariness in continuous money getting, even to the edge of the grave. They had formed none of those habits of mind, had cultivated none of those accomplishments, acquired none of those tastes which enables a man to, not simply endure life, but to enjoy it, and so they were shut up to the weary grind of money getting. This kind of success in life is probably the worst kind of defeat possible. Perhaps we have wandered away from our text, but it will not be in vain if some of our readers will stop for a moment, and figure out what kind of a life one should live to insure, particularly when age comes, the greatest possible amount of happiness in the exercise of richly equipped faculties, and in the contemplation of a wise and honorable retrospect.

Wounded in the House of Its Friends

At a recent meeting of the New York association of Methodist ministers, which occurs every Monday morning and is attended by about 400 preachers, one of their number, the Rev. S. P. Cadman, read a paper in which he repudiated the inspiration of the Bible. Along with much other nonsense of the same kind he said that the inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible are no longer possible of belief among reasoning men. The most significant part of the performance was the applause which greeted these utterances. Among the 400 ministers present there appeared to be no dissenting voice. The assaults which these smart young mouthers of the Cadman type are making upon the Bible, their efforts to weaken faith in the blessed Book which has been the comfort and stay of our fathers and mothers, that Book which in the days of persecution men and women became martyrs for the privilege of reading and believing, that Book which is our strong